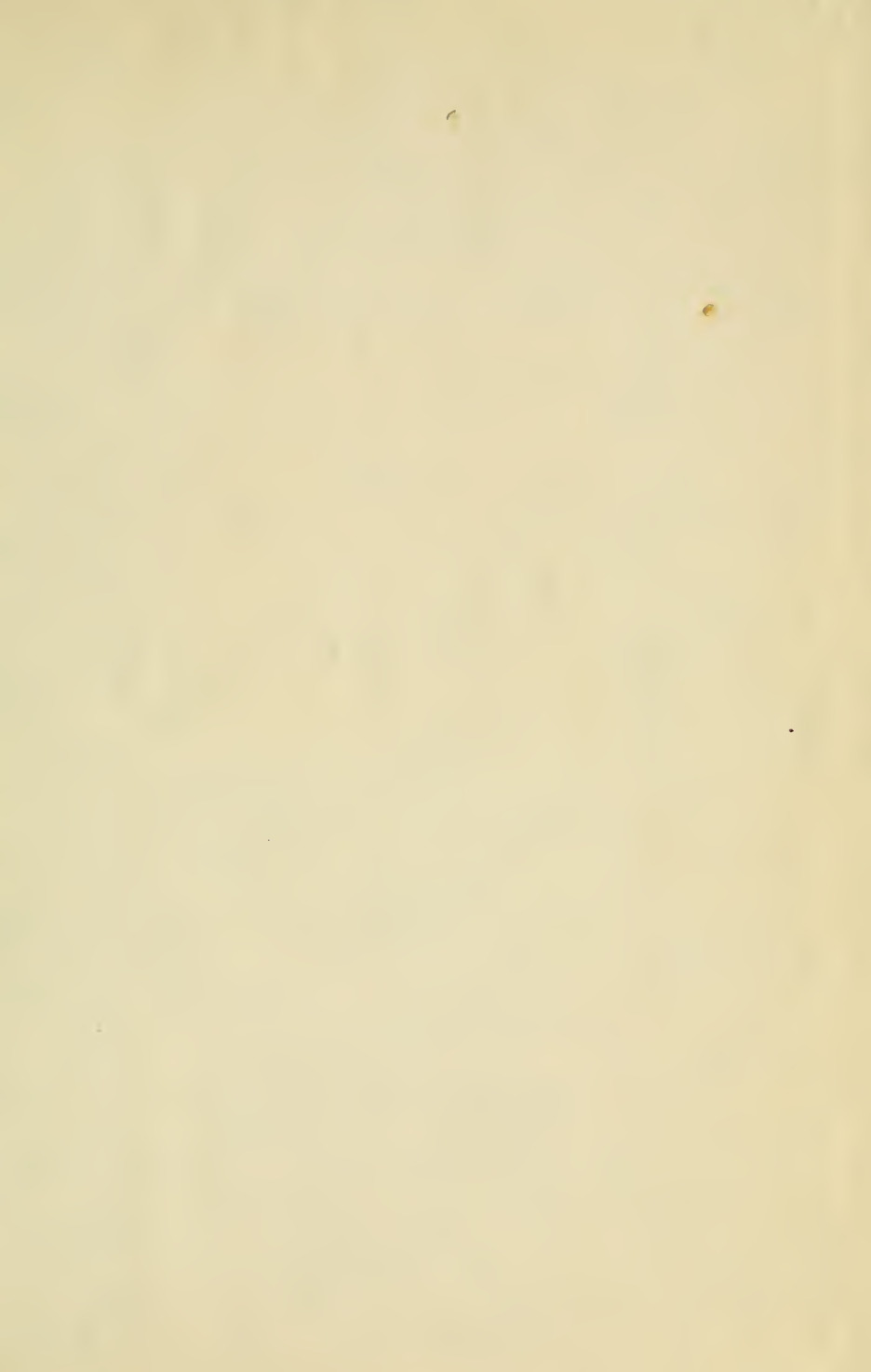




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THE

/LAW OF WOMAN LIFE/

BY

A. D. T. W.

THE LAW OF WOMAN-LIFE.

THE external arguments on both sides the modern woman question have been pretty thoroughly presented and well argued. It seems needless to repeat or recombine them; but in one relation they have scarcely been handled with any direct purpose. Justice and expediency have been the points insisted on or contested; these have not gone back far enough; they have not touched the central fact, to set it forth in its force and finality. The fact is original and inherent, behind and at the root of the entire matter, with all its complication and circumstance. We have to ask a question to which it is the answer, and whose answer is that of the whole doubt and dispute.

What is the law of woman-life?

What was she made woman for, and not man?

Shall we look back to that old third chapter of Genesis?

When mankind had taken the knowledge and power of good and evil into their own hands through the mere earthly wisdom of the serpent; when the woman had had her hasty outside way and lead, according to the story, and woe had come of it, — what was the sentence? And was it a penance, or a setting right, or a promise, or all three?

The serpent was first dealt with. The narrow policy, the keen cunning, the little, immediate outlook, the expedient motive; all that was impersonated of temporary shift and outward prudence in mortal affairs, regardless of, or blind to, the everlasting issues; all, in short, that represented material and temporal interest as a rule and order, — and is not man's external administration upon the earth largely forced to be a legislation upon these principles and economies? — was disposed of with the few words, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman."

Was this punishment, — as reflected upon the woman, — or the power of a grand retrieval for her? Not to man, who

had been led, and who would be led again, by the woman, was the commission of holy revenge intrusted; but henceforth, "I will set the *woman* against thee." Against the very principle and live prompting of evil, or of mere earthly purpose and motive. "Between thy seed and her seed." Your struggle with her shall be in and for the very life of the race. "It," her life brought forth, "shall bruise thy head," thy whole power, and plan, and insidious cunning; "and thou shalt bruise," shalt sting, torment, hinder, and trouble in the way and daily going, "his heel," his footstep. Thou, the subtle and creeping thing of the ground, shalt lurk after and threaten with crookedness and poison the ways of the men-children in their earth-toiling; the woman, the mother, shall turn upon thee for and in them, and shall beat thee down!

Unto the woman he said, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception." The burden and the glory are set in one. The pain of the world shall be in your heart; the trouble, the contradiction of it, shall be against your love and insight. But your pain shall be your power; you shall be the life-bearer; you shall hold the motive; yours shall be the *desire*, and your husband's the dominion. Therefore shall you bring your aspiration to him, that he may fulfil it for you. "Your desire shall be unto him, and he shall rule."

And unto Adam he said, "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife," — yes, and because thou *wilt* hearken, — "thy sorrow shall be in the labor of the earth; the ground shall be cursed;" in all material things shall be cross and trouble, not against you, but "for your sake." "In your sorrow you shall eat of it all the days of your life." Your need and struggle shall be with external things, and with the ruling of them. "For your sake," that you may learn your mastery, inherit your true power, carry out with ease and understanding the desire and need of the race, which woman represents, discerns afar, and pleads to you.

And Adam bowed before the Lord's judgment; we are not told that he answered anything to that; but he turned to his wife, and in that moment "called her name Eve, because she was the mother of all living." Then and there was the division made; and to which, can we say, was the empire given? Both were set in conditions, hemmed in to divine and special work: man, by the stress and sorrow of the ground; woman, by the stress and sorrow of her maternity, and of her *spiritual conception*, — making her truly the "mother of all the living."

At the beginning of human history, or tradition, then, we get the answer to our question: the law of woman-life is central, interior, and from the heart of things; the law of the man's life is circumferential, enfolding, shaping, bearing on and around, outwardly; wheel within wheel is the constitution of human power. It will be an evil day for the world when the nave shall leave its place and contend for that of the felloe. Iron-rimmed for its busy revolution and outward contact is the life and strength of man; but the tempered steel is at the heart and within the soul of the woman, that she may bear the silent pressure of the axle, and quietly and invisibly originate and support the entire onward movement. "The spirit of the living creature is in the wheels," and they can move no otherwise. "When the living creatures went, the wheels went by them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up." That was what Ezekiel saw in his vision. There can be no going forward without a life and presence and impulse at the centre; and in the organization of humanity there is where the place and power of woman have been put. For good or for evil, for the serpent or for the redeeming Christ, she must move, must influence, must achieve beforehand, and at the heart; she must be the mother of the race; she must be the mother of the Messiah. Not woman in her own person, but

"one born of woman," is the Saviour. For everything that is formed of the Creator, from the unorganized stone to the thought of righteousness in the heart of the race, there must be a matrix: in the creation and in the re-creation of his human child God makes woman and the soul of woman his blessed organ and instrument. When woman clears herself of her own perversions, her self-imposed limitations, returns to her spiritual power and place, and cries, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word," then shall the spirit descend unto her; then shall come the redemption.

Take this for the starting-point; it is the key.

Within, behind, antecedent to all result in action, are the place and office of the woman, — by the law of woman-life. And all question of her deed and duty should be brought to this test. Is it of her own, interior, natural relation, putting her at her true advantage, harmonious with the key to which her life is set? I think this suffrage question must settle itself precisely upon this ground-principle, and that all argument should range conclusively around it. Judging so, we should find, I think, that not at the polls, where the last utterance of a people's voice is given, — where the results of character, and conscience, and intelligence are shown, — is her best and rightful work; on the contrary, that it is useless here, unless first done elsewhere. But where little children learn to think and speak, — where men love and listen, and the word is forming, — is the office she has to fill, the errand she has to do. The question is, can she do both? Is there need that she should do both? Does not the former and greater include the later and less?

Hers are indeed the primary meetings: in her nursery, her home, and social circles; with other women, with young men, upon whose tone and character in her maturity her womanhood and motherhood join their beautiful and mighty

influence; above all, among young girls — the “little women,” to whom the ensign and commission are descending — is her undisputed power. Purify politics? Purify the sewers? But what if, first, the springs, and reservoirs, and conduits could be watched, guarded, filtered, and then the using be made clean and careful all through the homes; a better system devised and carried out for separating, neutralizing, destroying, hurtful refuse? Then the poisonous gases might not be creeping back upon us through our enforced economies, our makeshifts and stop-gaps of outside legislation. For legislation is, after all, but cut-off, curb, and patch; an external, troublesome, partial, uncertain application of hindrance and remedy. What physician will work with lotion and plaster when he can touch, and control, and heal at the very seat of the disease?

It is the beginning of the fulfilment that women have waked to the consciousness that they have not as yet filled their full place in human life and affairs. Only has not the mistake been made of contending with and grappling results, when causes were in their hands? Have they not let go the main-springs, to run after and ineffectually push with pins the refractory cogs upon the wheel-rims?

Woman always deserts herself when she puts her life and motive and influence in mere outsides. Outsides of fashion and place, outsides of charm and apparel, outsides of work and ambition, — she must learn that these are not her true showing; she must go back and put herself where God has called her to be with himself, at the silent, holy inmost; then we shall feel, if not at once, yet surely soon or sometime, a new order beginning. He, the Father of all, gives it to us to be the motherhood. That is the great solving and upraising word; not limited to mere parentage, but the law of woman-life. For good or for evil she mothers the world. Not all are called to motherhood in the literal sense, but all are

called to the great, true motherhood in some of its manifold trusts and obligations. "*Noblesse oblige*;" you cannot lay it down. "More are the children of the desolate than of her who hath a husband." All the little children that are born must look to womanhood somewhere for mothering. Do they all get it? All the works and policies of men look back somewhere for a true "desire" toward and by which only they can rule. Is the desire of the woman—of the home, the mother-motive of the world and human living—kept in the integrity and beauty for which it was entrusted to her, that it might move the power of man to noble ends?

Do you ask the governing of the nation? You have the making of the nation. Would you choose your statesmen? First make your statesmen.

Indeed the whole cause on trial may be summarily ended by the proving of an *alibi*, an elsewhere of demand. Is woman needed at the caucuses, conventions, polls? She is needed, at the same time, elsewhere. Two years of time and strength, of thought and love, from some woman, are essential for every little human being, that he may even begin a life. When you remember that every man is once a little child, born of a woman, trained—or needing training—at a woman's hands; that of the little men, every one of whom takes and shapes his life so, come at length the hand for the helm, the voice for the law, and the arm to enforce law,—what do you want more for a woman's opportunity and control?

Which would you choose as a force, an advantage, in settling any question of public moment, or as touching your own private interest through the general management,—the right to go upon election day and cast one vote, or a hold beforehand upon the individual ear and attention of each voter now qualified? The ability to present to him your argument, to show him the real point at issue, to convince

and persuade him of the right and lasting, instead of the weak and briefly politic way? This initial privilege is in the hands of woman, assuming that she can be brought to feel and act as a unit, which appears to be what is claimed for her in the argument for her regeneration of the outer political world. But already and separately, if every intelligent, conscientious woman can but reach one man, and influence him from the principle involved, — from her interior perception of it, kept pure on purpose from bias and temptation that assail him in the outside mix and jostle, — will she not have done her work without the casting of a ballot? And what becomes of "taxation without representation," when, from Eden down, Eve can always plead with Adam, can have the first word instead of the last, — if she knows what that first word is, in herself and thence in its power with him, — can beguile him to his good instead of to his harm, as indeed she only meant to do in that first ignorant experiment? Would it be any less easy to qualify for and accomplish this than to convince and outnumber in public gathering not only bodies of men but the mass of women that will also have to be confronted and convinced or overborne?

Preconceived opinions, minds made up, men not so easily beguiled to the pure good, you say? Woman quite as apt to make mistakes out of Paradise as in? That only returns us to the primal need and opportunity. Get the man to listen to you before his mind is made up, — before his manhood is made up; while it is in the making. That is just the power and place that belong to you, and you must seize and fill. It is your natural right; God gave it to you. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head."

We cannot do all in one day, and in such a day of the world as this. We plant trees for posterity, where forests have been laid waste, and the beautiful work of life is to be done over again; we cannot expect to see our fruit in souls

and in the nation at less cost of faith and time. Take care, then, of the little children: the men-children, to make men of them; the women-children, — oh, yes, even above all, — to make ready for future mothering; to snatch from the evil that works over against pure womanliness. Until you have done this let men fend for themselves in rough outsides a little longer; except, perhaps, as wise, able women whom the trying transition time calls forth may find fit way and place for effort and protest, — there is always room for that, and noble work has been and is being done; but do not rear a new generation of women to expect and desire charges and responsibilities reverse of their own life-law, through whose perfect fulfilment alone may the future clean place be made for all to work in.

Is there excess of female population? Cannot all expect the direct rule of a home? Is not this exactly, perhaps, just now, for the more universal remedial mothering that in this age is the thing immediately needed? Let her who has no child seek where she can help the burdened mother of many; how she can best reach with influence, and wisdom, and cherishing, the greatest number — or most efficiently a few — of these dear, helpless, terrible little souls, who are to make, in a few years, a new social condition; a better and higher, happier and safer, or a lower, worse, bitterer, more desperately complicated and distressful one.

"Desire earnestly the best gifts," said St. Paul, after enumerating the gifts of teaching and prophecy and authority; "and I show you," he goes on, "a yet more excellent way." *Charity*, — not mere alms, or toleration, or general benignity, out of a safe self-provision; but *caritas*, — nearness, and caring, and loving, — the very essence of mothering; the way to and hold of the heart of it all, the heart of the life of humanity. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." That is the first word; it charges

womanhood itself, which must be set utterly right before it can take hold to right the world. Here are at once task and mission and rewarding sway.

Woman has got off the track; she must see that first, and replace herself. We are mothering the world still; but we are mothering it, in a fearfully wide measure, all wrong.

Sacrifice is the beginning of all redemption. We must give up. We must even give up the wish and seeming to have a hand in things, that we may work unseen in the elements, and make them fit and healthful; that daily bread and daily life may be sweet again in dear, old, homely ways, and plentiful with all truly blessed opportunities. We are not to organize the world, or to conquer it, or to queen it. We are just to take it again and mother it. If woman would begin that, search out the cradles, — of life and character, — and take care of the whole world of fifty years hence in taking care of them, calling upon men and the State, when needful, to authorize her action and furnish outward means for it, — I wonder what might come, as earnest of good, even in this our day, in which we know not our visitation?

And here again come allowance and exception for what women can always do when this world-mothering forces an appeal to the strength and authority of man. Women have never been prevented from doing their real errands in the world, even outside the domestic boundary. They have defended their husbands' castles in the old chivalrous times, when the male chivalry was away at the crusades. They have headed armies when Heaven called them; only Heaven never called all the women at once; but when the king was crowned, the mission done, they have turned back with desire to their sheltered, gentle, unobtrusive life again. There has no business to be a standing army of women; not even a standing political army. Women have navigated and brought home ships when commanders have died or

been stricken helpless upon the ocean ; they have done true, intelligent, patient work for science, art, religion ; and those have done the most who have never stopped to contend first, whether a woman, as such, may do it or not. Look at what Dorothea Dix has done, single-handed, singled-mouthed, in asylums and before legislatures. Women have sat on thrones, and governed kingdoms well, when that was the station in life to which God called them. If Victoria of England has been anything, she has been the mother of her land ; she has been queen and protecting genius of its womanhood and homes. And when a woman does these things, as called of God, — not talks of them, as to whether she may make claim to do them, — she carries a weight from the very sanctity out of which she steps, as woman, that moves men unlike the moving of any other power. Shall she resign the chance of doing really great things, of meeting grand crises, by making herself common in ward-rooms and at street-corners, and abolishing the perfect idea of home by no longer consecrating herself to it?

If individual woman, as has been said, may gain and influence individual man, and so the man-power in affairs, — a body of women, purely as such, with cause, and plea, and reason, can always have the ear and attention of bodies of men ; but, to do this, they must come straight from their home sanctities, as representing them, — as able to represent them otherwise than men, because of their hearth-priestesshood ; not as politicians, bred and hardened in the public arenas.

That the family is the heart of the State, and that the State is but the widened family, is the fact which the old vestal consecration, power, and honor set forth and kept in mind.

The voice which has of late been so generally conceded to women in town decisions as regarding public schools, is

an instance of the fittingness of relegating to them certain interests of which they should know more than men, because — applying the key-test with which we have started — it has direct relation to, and springs from, their motherhood. But can one help suggesting that if the movement had been to place women, merely and directly, upon the committees, by votes of men who saw that this work might be in great part best done by them; if women had asked and offered for the place without the jostle of the town-meeting, or putting in that wedge for the ballot, — the thing might have been as readily done, and the objection, or political precedent, avoided?

It is not the real opportunity, when that arises or shows itself in the line of her life-law, that is to be refused for woman. It is the taking from internal power to add to external complication of machinery and to the friction of strife. Let us just touch upon some of the current arguments concerning these external impositions which one set is demanding and the other entreating against.

If voting is to be the chief power in woman's hands, or even a power of half the moment that is contended for it, it will grow to be the motive and end, the all-absorbing object, with women that it is with men.

The gubernatorial canvass, the presidential year, — these will interrupt and clog all home business, suspend decisions, paralyze plans, as they do with men, or else we shall not be much, as thorough politicians, after all. And if we talk of mending all that, — of putting politics in their right place, and governing by pure principle instead of party trick, and stumping and electioneering, — we go back in effect to the acknowledgment that only in the interior work, and behind politics, can women do better things at all; which, precisely, was to be demonstrated.

Think, simply, of election day for women.

Would it be so invariably easy a thing for a home-keeper to do, at the one opportunity of the year, or the four years, on a particular day, her duty in this matter? It is easy to say that it takes no more time than a hundred other things that some do; but setting apart all the argument that previous time and strength must have been spent in properly qualifying, how many of the hundred other things are done now without interruption, postponement, hindrance, through domestic contingencies? or *are* there a hundred other things done when the home contingencies are really met by a woman? A woman's life is not like a man's. That a man's life *may be*, — that he may transact his out-door business; keep his hours and appointments; may cast his vote on election day; may represent wife and children in all wherein the community cares for, or might injure him and them, — the woman, some woman, must be at the home post, that the home order may go on, from which he derives that command of time, and freedom from hindering necessities, which leave him to his work. And so, as the old proverb says, while man's work is from sun to sun, — made definite, a matter to which he can go forth, and from which he can come in, — a woman's work, of keeping the place of the forth-going and incoming, is never done, from the very nature and ceaseless importance of it.

Must she go to the polls, sick or well, baby or no baby, servant or no servant, strength or no strength, desire or no desire? If she have cook and housemaid they are to go also, and number her two to one, anyway; probably on election day, which they would make a holiday, they would — as at other crises, of birth, sickness, death, house-cleaning, which should occur in no first-class families — come down upon her with their appropriate *coup d'etat*, and "leave;" making the State-stroke, in this instance, of scoring three votes, two dropped and one lost, for the irrepressible side.

How will it be when Norah, and Maggie, and Katie have not only their mass and confession, their fourth-of-July and Christmas, their mission-weeks, their social engagements and family plans, and their appointments with their dress-makers, to curtail your claims upon their bargained time and service, but their share in the primary meetings and caucuses, committees, and torch-light processions, and mass meetings? For what shall prevent the excitements, the pleasurings, the runnings hither and thither, that men delight in from following in the train of politics and parties with the common woman? Perhaps it may even be discovered, to the still further detriment of our already painfully hampered and perplexed domestic system, that the pursuit of fun, votes, offices, is more remunerative, as well as gentlewomanly, — as Micawber might express it, — than the cleansing of pots and pans, the weekly wash, or the watching of the roast. Perhaps in that enfranchised day there will be no Katies and Maggies, and the Norahs will know their place no more. Then the enlightened womanhood may have to begin at the foundation, and glorify the kitchen again. And good enough for her, in the wide as well as primitive sense of the phrase, and a grand turn in the history that repeats itself toward the old, forgotten, peaceful side of the cycle it may be!

But the argument does not rest upon any such points as these. It rests upon the inside nature of a woman's work; upon the need there is to begin again to-day at the heart of things and make that right; upon the evident fact that this can be done none too soon or earnestly, if the community and the country are not to keep on in the broad way to a threatened destruction; and upon the certainty that it can never be done unless it is done by woman, and with all of woman's might. Not by struggles for new and different place, but by the better, more loving, more intelligent, deep-

seeing and deep-feeling filling of her own place, that none will dispute and none can take from her. We are not where woman was in the old brutal days that are so often quoted; and we shall not, need not, return to that. Christianity has disposed of that sort of argument. We are on a vantage ground for the doing of our real, essential work better than it has been done ever before in the history of the world; and we are madly leaving our work and our vantage together. The great step made by woman was in the generation preceding this one of restlessness, — the restlessness that has come through the first feeling of great power. It was made in the time when women learned physiology, that they might rear and nurse their families and help their neighborhoods understandingly; science, that they might teach and answer little children, and share the joy of knowledge that was spreading swiftly in the earth; political history and economy, that they might listen and talk to their brothers and husbands and sons, and leaven the life of the age as the bread in the mixing; business figures, rules, and principles, that they might sympathize, counsel, help, and prudentially work with and honestly strengthen the bread-winners. The good work was begun in the schools where girls were first told, as George B. Emerson used to tell us Boston girls, that we were learning everything he could teach us, in order to be *women*: wives, mothers, friends, social influencers, in the best and largest way possible. Women grew strong and capable under such instruction and motive. Are their daughters and granddaughters about to leap the fence, leave their own realm little cared for, — or doomed to be, — undertake the whole scheme of outside creation, or contest it with the men? Then God help the men! God save the Commonwealth!

We are past the point already where homes are suffering, or liable to suffer, neglect or injury; they are already *left unmade*. Shall this go on? Between frivolities and ambi-

tions, between social vanities, and shows, and public meddlings and mixings, — for where one woman is needed and doing really brave, true work, there are a hundred rushing forth for the mere sake of rushing, — is the primitive home, the power of heaven upon earth, to slip away from among us? Let us not build outsides which have no insides; let us not put a face upon things which has no reality behind it. Beware lest we make the confusion that we need the suffrage to help us unmake; lest we tear to pieces that we may patch again. Crazy patchwork that would be, indeed!

Are women's votes required because men will not legislate away evils that they do not heartily wish away? Is government corrupted because men desire shield and opportunity for dishonest speculation; authority and countenance for nefarious combinations? The more need to go to work at the beginning rather than to plunge into the pitch and be defiled; more need to make haste and educate a better generation of men, if it be so we cannot, except *vi et armis*, influence the generation that is. But do you think that if women are in earnest, — enough in earnest to give up, as they seem to be to demand, — they might not bring their real power to bear even upon these evil things, in their root and inception, and even now? Suppose women would not live in houses, or wear jewels and gowns, that are bought for them out of wicked millions made upon the stock exchange? Suppose they would stop decorating their dwellings to an agony, crowding them hurriedly with this and that of the last and newest, just because it is last and new, making a show and rivalry of what is not a true-grown beauty of a home at all, but a mere meretriciousness; suppose they would so set to work and change society that displays and feasting, which use up at every separate one a year's comfortable support for a quiet, modest family, should be given up as vulgarities; that people should care for, and be ready for, a true interchange of life and thought, and simple, uncrowded

opportunities for these; suppose women would say, "No; I will not blaze at Newport, or run through Europe dropping American eagles or English sovereigns after me like the trail of a comet, or the crumbs that Hop-o'-my-thumb let fall from his pocket that the people at home might track the way he had gone; because, if I have money, there is better work to be done with it; and I will not have the money that is made by gambling manipulations and cheats." Do you think this would have no influence? More than that, and further back, and lowlier down, suppose they should say, every one, "I will not have the new, convenient house, the fresh carpetings, the pretty curtains, or even the least, most fitting freshness, until I know the means are earned for me with honest service to the world, and by no lucky turn of even a small speculation." Further back yet, suppose them to declare, "I will not have the home at all, nor my own happiness, unless it can be based and builded on the kind of life-work that helps to make a real prosperity; that really goes to the building and safe-keeping of a whole nation of such homes." Would there be no power in that? Would it not be a kind of woman-suffrage to settle the very initials of all that ever bears upon the public question? And to bring that sort of woman on the stage, and to the front, is there not enough work to do, and enough "higher education" to insist on and secure?

After all, men work for women; or, if they think they don't, it would leave them but sorry satisfaction to abandon them to such existence as they could arrange without us. In blessed homes, or in scattered dissipations of show, amusement, or the worse which these shows and amusements are but terribly akin to, women give purpose to and direct the results of all men's work. If the false standards of living first urge them, until at length the horrible intoxication of the game itself drives them on further and deeper, are we less responsible for the last state of those men than for the first?

Do you say, if good women refused these things and tried for a simpler and truer living, there are plenty of bad ones who would take them anyhow, and supply the motive to deeper and more unmitigated evil? Ah, there come both answer and errand again. Raise the fallen,—at least save the growing womanhood,—stop the destruction that rushes accelerating on, before you challenge new difficulty and danger with an indiscriminate franchise. Are not these bad women the very “plenty” that would out-balance you at the polls, if you persist in trying the “patch-and-plaster” remedy of suffrage and legislation?

Recognize the fact, the law, that your power, your high commission, is inward—vital—formative and causal. Bring all question of choice or duty to this test,—will it work at the heart of things, among the realities and forces? Try your own life by this; remember that mere external is falsehood and death. The letter killeth. Give up all that is only of the appearance,—or even chiefly so, in conscious delight and motive,—in person, surrounding, pursuit. Let your self-presentation, your home-making and adorning, your social effort and interest, your occupation and use of talent, all shape and issue for the things that are essentially and integrally good, and that the world needs to have prevail. Until you can do this, and induce such doing, it is of little use to clamor for mere outward right, or to contend that it would be rightly applied.

Work as you will, and widely as you can, for schools, in associations, in everything whose end is to teach, enlighten, enlarge women, and so the world. Help and protect the industries of women; but keep those industries within the guiding law of woman-life. Do not throw down barriers that take down safeguards with them; that make threatening breaches in the very social structure. If women must serve in shops, demand and care for it that it shall be, in a less

mixed, a more shielded way than now. The great caravansaries of trade are perilous by their throng, publicity, and weariness. There used to be women's shops; choice places, where a woman's care and taste had ruled before the counters were spread; where women could quietly purchase things that were sure to be beautiful or of good service; there were not the tumult and ransacking that kill both shop-girl and shopper now. This is one instance, and but one, of the rescuing that ought to be attempted. There ought at least to be distinct women's departments, presided over by women of good, motherly tone and character, in the places of business which women so frequent, and where the thoughtful are aware of much that makes them tremble. And surely a great many of the girls and women who choose shop-work, because they like its excitement, ought rather to be in homes, rendering womanly service, and preparing to serve in homes of their own,—leaving their present places to young men who might perhaps begin so to earn the homes to offer them. Will not this apply all the way up, into the arts and the professions even? There must needs be exceptional women perhaps; there are, and will be, time and errand and place for them; but Heaven forbid that they should all become exceptional!

Once more, work for these things that are behind, and underlie; believing that woman's place is behind and within, not of repression, but of power; and that if she do not fill this place it will be empty; there will be no main-spring. Meanwhile she will get her rights as she rises to them, and her defences where she needs them; everything that helps, defends, uplifts the woman uplifts man and the whole fabric, and man has begun to find it out. If he "will give the suffrage, if women want it," as is said, why shall he not as well give them the things that they want suffrage for, and that they are capable of representing? Believe me, this work, and the representation which grows out of it, can no longer be

done if we attempt the handling of political machinery, — the making of platforms, the judging of candidates, the measuring and disputation of party plans and issues, and all the tortuous following up of public and personal political history. Do you say, men have their individual work in the world, and all this beside and of it, and that therefore we may? Exactly here comes in again the law of the interior. Their work *is* "of it," — falls in the way. They rub against it as they go along. Men meet each other in the business thoroughfares, at the offices and the street-corners; we are in the dear depths of home. We are with the little ones, of whom is not this kingdom, but the kingdom of heaven, which we, through them, may help to come. This is just where we must abandon our work, if we attempt the doing of theirs. And here is where our prestige will desert us, whenever great cause calls us to speak from out our seclusions, and show men, from our insights and our place, the occasion and desire that look unto their rule. They will not listen then; they will remand us to the ballot-box.

"Inside politics" is a good word. That is just where woman ought to be, as she ought to be inside everything; insisting upon and implanting the truth and right that are to conquer. And she cannot be inside and outside both. She cannot do the mothering and the home-making, the watching and ministry, the earning and maintaining hold and privilege and motive influence behind and through the acts of men, — and all the world-wide execution of act beside. Therefore, we say, do not give up the substance which you might seize, for the shadow which you could not hold fast if you were to seem to grasp it. Work on at the foundations. Insist on truth and right; put them into all your own life, taking all the beam out of your own eye before demanding, — well, we will say the *mote*, for generosity's sake, and for the holy authority of the word, — out of the brother's eyes.

Establish pure, honest, lovely things, — things of good report, — in the nurseries, the schools, the social circles where you reign, and the outside world and issue will take form and heed for themselves. The nation, of which the family is the root, will be made, and built, and saved accordingly. Every seed hath its own body. The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent-head of evil, and shall rise triumphant to become the ennobled, re-created commonwealth. Then shall pour forth the double pæan that thrills through the glorious final chorus of Schumann's Faust, — men and women answering in antiphons: **PB0-8934**

“The indescribable,
Here it is done;
The ever-womanly
Beckons us on!”

Then shall Mary — the fulfilled, ennobled womanhood — sing her Magnificat; standing to receive from the Lord, and to give the living word to the nations: —

“My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God, my Saviour.
For He hath looked upon the low estate of His handmaiden:
For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.
For He that is mighty hath done to me great things;
And holy is His name.
And His mercy is unto generations and generations.”


The coming new version of the Old Testament gives us, we are told, among other more perfect renderings, this one, which fitly utters charge and promise: —

“The Lord gave the word;
Great was the company
Of those
That published it.”

“The Lord giveth the word;
And the women that bring
Glad tidings
Are a great host.”

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